



20 of 23 DOCUMENTS

Copyright 1991 The Washington Post
The Washington Post

March 4, 1991, Monday, Final Edition

SECTION: METRO; PAGE D1

LENGTH: 1153 words

HEADLINE: Budget Ax Cutting Into U-Md. Plans;
Aspirations Fall At Flagship Campus

SERIES: Occasional

BYLINE: Amy Goldstein, Washington Post Staff Writer

BODY:

As the state's tight economy constricts the flow of money to the University of Maryland, quality is slipping and expectations are coming unglued at its flagship campus in College Park.

The math department can't afford to replace its mailroom clerk, so professors work two-hour shifts sorting mail. The campus police force has cut nine patrol officers. And the student affairs office has curtailed personal and academic counseling by 30 percent.

Ryan Chapin, a freshman who plans to major in art, found that nude models no longer would be hired in his first studio class. Maria Rossano, a senior majoring in genetics, discovered that the school had canceled a recombinant DNA laboratory that she had thought would give her an edge in the job market.

The cuts, which come after a massive, three-year infusion of cash to state colleges and universities by the Maryland General Assembly, are especially painful at College Park, where administrators, faculty and students said they were being propelled to academia's front ranks after years as an also-ran.

"The momentum was so strong; the aspirations were so high," said William E. Kirwan, president of the College Park campus. "And the reversal has been so severe and so quick."

"We were starved for a very long time," said geology professor Ann Wylie. "Now we have just this little taste, and they yank it right back from us."

Ivan Penn, editor of the student newspaper, the Diamondback, said, "You've had students in the last few years walking through mud on campus, walking into overcrowded classrooms with promises of all this ending soon. Now it

doesn't look like the vision of the flagship campus is going to come for a little while."

The scrimping is not unique to the 35,000-student College Park campus. In September, Gov. William Donald Schaefer ordered all 11 schools in the University of Maryland system to return a total of \$ 53 million in subsidies; College Park has been docked \$ 20.5 million, or 9 percent of its basic state aid.

Schaefer's budget for the coming year would give the system \$ 219.7 million, its smallest sum in three years. Legislative leaders said last week they may trim a little more.

Since December, professors and administrators at College Park have been immersed in the unpleasant task of figuring out for next year how to make do with less. They are about to give their advice to Kirwan, who said he wants to protect the campus's strongest parts by sacrificing some of the rest.

The common wisdom on campus is that many priorities of the last few years will suffer heavy hits.

Graduate Studies Dean Jacob Goldhaber said he expects to cut fellowships from 250 to 175, reversing a major campus effort to attract more and better graduate students. The campus also plans to furnish fewer scholarships to help recruit especially bright undergraduates and minority students.

Nowhere is the despair greater than in the anthropology department, whose chairman, Tony Whitehead, was lured away from the University of North Carolina with promises that, if he nurtured the young Maryland department, it could begin to offer doctoral degrees.

This winter, Whitehead learned that his 11-member department -- the only anthropology program among Maryland's public colleges -- was on a hit list of possible cuts.

The possibility of extinction "is very, very disruptive, very stressful," said Whitehead, who will not know for certain until this spring whether his department will disband.

In addition to anthropology, departments being considered for elimination or major reductions include urban studies; radio, television and film; housing and design; industrial education; and nuclear engineering, according to faculty sources.

"My job is on the stakes," said David Ebert, director of College Park's nuclear reactor, one of 25 on U.S. university campuses and a possible target of cuts. Although students have sent protest letters to campus administrators and the U.S. secretary of energy, Ebert said, "It doesn't look good for us."

The deepest cuts will not take place until next fall. But already, the impact of the financial trouble is tangible.

The campus has not rehired 80 part-time instructors and many graduate teaching assistants for the spring semester. As a result, students found longer waiting lists for classes and more difficulty getting into popular courses, including ones in journalism, government and psychology.

Administrators have stopped a much-touted reduction in the undergraduate student body. They also have canceled freshman seminars, a cornerstone of recent efforts to personalize education on the enormous campus.

Undergraduates from outside Maryland must pay a tuition surcharge this semester of 7.5 percent. "Students are angry -- they are paying more but getting less," said Vicki Gruber, a senior who is president of the Student Government Association.

Meanwhile, the geology department has been unable to move into a new building. And the psychology department is unable to build a neuroscience teaching laboratory, for which it had been saving money for several years.

Budget Ax Cutting Into U-Md. Plans; Aspirations Fall At Flagship Campus The Washington Post March 4, 1991,
Monday, Final Edition

Engineering Dean George Dieter said the school may have to drop out of a prestigious National Science Foundation coalition that is trying to improve undergraduate training of engineers.

Many departments have begun rationing copying paper. Because of restrictions on long-distance telephone calls, Andrew Wolvin, a speech communications professor, said, he has resorted to mailing letters to his editors as he finishes a book.

For a campus that is trying to improve, the biggest threat is to the ability to attract new professors, and to keep the ones it recently has acquired. If the anthropology department disbands, "I probably wouldn't stay," said Whitehead, whose departure would deprive the campus of a black professor as it is struggling to diversify its faculty.

Already, the faculty members in transportation studies, a well-rated business program, have received several offers from other universities to move en masse, Kirwan said.

Though all universities suffer hard times, Kirwan said, College Park is especially vulnerable. "The excellence being built here is of a relatively recent vintage. We do not yet have the traditions that can tide us over."

He contended, however, that the setbacks will prove temporary. After decades of political neglect, he said, the campus recently has won enough influential friends in Annapolis that its subsidies will spring back once the economy recovers.

Others are less certain. "We do not have a heritage of support for higher education," said Goldhaber, the graduate dean. "It takes time to grow."

In the meantime, the campus has collided with "the frustration of rising expectations," said Marvin Breslow, an associate history professor. "When you've been in a state of really improving, then to throw the car suddenly into reverse, you can get whiplash."